Employattitudes: domestics

H.P.A.
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The noteworthy things is not that there are bums in the agricultural labor market, but that there is a single American citizne left who isn't a bum. Strange as it must appear, this is precisely the case. There are a great many domestics still performing farm labor who are intelligent, stable, conscientious, reliable, of good moral character, and possessed of all the other virtues you might care to name. Why do they remain in the farm labor market? In the overwhelming majority of cases, I would say it is because they are barred by racial, ethnic, or other types of bigotry from entering other labor markets. In other words, the growers who are paying these $3.00-an-hour workers less than $1.00 an hour are cashing in very directly on social prejudice. (NO WONDER THEY OPPOSE FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES!!!!!.'.'.')

Here is a good example of the way this process works: Andres Arellano is a man of unimpeachable abilities. Over a period of many years, he worked his way up from section hand to gang foreman with the Southern Pacific Company. In 1952, he had a better offer from Western Pacific, so switched, still as gang foreman. By 1957, he was making $415 per month, which bespeaks the responsibility he must have exercised. But in a wave of lay-offs that year, he was released. Despite the many years he had put in on the railroad, he was denied the seniority rights one might have thought would be his. Apparently, he was a victim of the "first fired" policy which is the usual lot of Negroes and Mexicans. One can easily understand why he didn't care to revert to section hand status. He started a trucking business with his savings. His trucks broke down, and he lost everything. Still no openin s on the railroad. So he is now a farm worker. Actually, HE RUNS THE FARM, caring for stock, machinery, etc. He gets $1.10 an hour, less than half what he was getting before in a position of comparable responsibility.